CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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FINAL RECORD OF THE SEVEN HUNDRED AND SECOND PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Thursday, 16 March 1995, at 10 a.m.

President: Mrs. Hisami Kurokochi (Japan)

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The PRESIDENT: I declare open the 702nd plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

At the outset, allow me to extend a warm welcome to His Excellency the Under-Secretary of State for Political Affairs of Finland, Mr. Jaakko Blomberg. His presence among us today, for the fourth time over the last two years, is yet further evidence of his country's continued commitment to, and interest in, the Conference on Disarmament. I am sure we are all looking forward to hearing the views of his Government on the issues before us. I should now like to invite Mr. Blomberg to take the floor.

Mr. BLOMBERG (Finland): Madam President, thank you for your kind words, and let me first of all welcome you as the President of the Conference as well as the head of the Japanese delegation. We look forward to cooperating with you, and I would also like you to kindly convey our thanks and best regards to your predecessor, Ambassador Tanaka.

The review and extension Conference of the nuclear non-proliferation Treaty begins in a month's time. Its results will reflect upon efforts to curb proliferation and advance arms control for decades to come. Its success is vital for our common security. At the Conference, each State party must answer two hard questions. First, which option of the three provided for the extension of the NPT would best serve its national security? Second, what would the consequences be for its security if the NPT were not extended indefinitely? In the Finnish case, the answers are unequivocal. Finland has concluded that it is in her national interest to make the NPT permanent. As a member State of the European Union, Finland is actively engaged in joint European Union action to seek the broadest possible support for the indefinite and unconditional extension of the NPT. For Finland as a non-nuclear-weapon State, the ultimate goal remains the elimination of nuclear weapons. A permanent NPT does not sanction permanent possession of nuclear weapons by anyone. This is clearly stated in article VI of the Treaty. But without a permanent NPT, total elimination of nuclear weapons risks becoming a permanent pipedream. The fourth and final session of the Preparatory Committee, chaired by a representative of my country, Ambassador Patokallio, set the stage for a successful review and extension Conference. We should all begin to focus now on a serious review of the operation of the NPT over the past five years as well as on taking the decision on extension that best serves our common security.

Progress in the negotiations for a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty is first of all important for its own sake. But it would also help prepare the ground for a successful NPT review and extension Conference. Finland urges faster progress on both counts. The treaty should be ready by the end of this year. Our position on the scope of the test-ban treaty is dictated by practical considerations. Not everything which may to some degree be relevant to the treaty is verifiable. Extending the scope of the treaty to activities that could not be verified within reason would only erode the credibility of the whole instrument. We welcome the decision by the United States to drop

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its proposal for a special right to withdraw from the treaty. As with the NPT, Finland supports a treaty that is of indefinite duration. A standard withdrawal clause, narrowly interpreted, is of course acceptable.

Our view continues to be that the treaty provisions on entry into force should be so constructed as to expedite an early entry into force. Once the treaty is open for signature and ratification, individual countries probably will condition their adherence with certain expectations, starting with the expectation that all five nuclear-weapon States join the treaty. This does not, however, necessitate establishing a priori categories of States for entry-into-force purposes. Political, judgements about the degree of universality required at the outset are best left for political declarations.

Finland supports the establishment of a small CTBT organization co-located with IAEA in Vienna. We see a functional relationship between what IAEA already does and what the CTBT organization will be doing. The treaty should provide for the possibility of contractual arrangements between the two organizations as far as cooperation in verification tasks and administrative support are concerned. Such a cooperative arrangement would clearly be cost-effective.

Finland supports an international monitoring system to collect information through four networks: a seismic network consisting of about 50 primary stations and about 100 auxiliary stations, a radionuclide network consisting of about 100 stations, an infrasound network of about 60 stations and a hydroacoustic network. A limited network for noble gas monitoring could also make a useful contribution. As a general principle, Finland believes that the IMS should use existing stations whenever and wherever possible.

Valuable work is being done in the context of the GSETT-3 test. We believe that it would be useful to start to plan tests with other networks as well.

Finland is ready to make available for the IMS one seismic station as well as one radionuclide station. We are prepared to assume the operational and maintenance costs of these stations for IMS use.

For reasons of cost-effectiveness as well as law, we believe that it is not necessary for the CTBT organization to own the stations in IMS use. Rather, the stations owned by individual States parties should be integrated into the IMS on a long-term contractual basis. As regards the financing of new stations or upgrading old ones, international funding should be the exception rather than the rule. Treaty provisions for the sharing of IMS costs should recognize that the stations in question in most cases serve other functions besides test ban monitoring.

It is important to ensure that all States parties have real-time access to all the data collected by the international data centre. However, we are not in favour of limiting the role of the IDC to that of a mailbox. The IDC should do technical analysis and refine the raw data into more readable form,

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at least for those States parties who cannot perform these functions themselves. Naturally, the drawing of political conclusions from the data should be left to the States parties.

In the final analysis, the credibility of the treaty will depend on effective provisions for on-site inspections. When necessary, an inspection should begin within a day or two of a suspicious event. We believe that sequencing the inspection into different phases and establishing faster procedures for the initial phase would serve this goal. The managed access provisions of the chemical weapons Convention could provide a model for balancing the requirements for an effective inspection and those for the protection of sensitive, unrelated information. In putting together inspection teams the CTBT organization should in the first place draw upon trained experts predesignated by the States parties. Consequently, only a small cadre of permanent inspectors would be required, with the attendant reduction in costs.

The Conference on Disarmament needs to move rapidly toward negotiating a ban on the production of fissile material for nuclear explosive purposes. Finland supports the efforts of the Special Coordinator, Ambassador Shannon of Canada, to forge a consensus on a non-specific negotiating mandate on the basis of United Nations General Assembly resolution 48/75 L. There is no good reason why questions relating to existing stockpiles should delay the start of the negotiations any further.

Transparency in armaments is a new important item on the CD's agenda. This Conference should not only be about nuclear issues. It should become more receptive to the insistent calls for conventional arms control. A repetition of last year's discussion would not be worthwhile, however. A more focused discussion of specific items of global import, such as the principles for international arms transfers, would now be in order.

The perennial issue of expansion of the CD's membership is again the subject of intense discussion, as it has been intermittently since the early 1980s. Last fall, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution which sets a baseline of at least 60 countries for the composition of the CD. Resolution 49/77 B should therefore guide the thinking of all of us. It was, after all, adopted by consensus. We find it simply unacceptable that our membership, and that of others, is held hostage to extraneous circumstances. Nor is it credible to argue that expansion is only necessary so that the so-called threshold States can be fully drawn into the test ban negotiations. Neither reasoning does credit to the Conference on Disarmament. Why should mischief, past or present, count for more than merit? Finland has long believed that any country that is willing and able to contribute to the work of the Conference should be accepted as a member on its own merits. We urge the Conference to prove us right in our belief.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the Under-Secretary of State for Political Affairs of Finland for his statement and for the kind words addressed to me. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Bulgaria, Ambassador Dobrev.

Mr. DOBREV (Bulgaria): Madam President, at the outset I would like to congratulate you on taking up the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament, which you have done at a challenging time. I am confident that, as a representative of Japan and with your experience in the field of arms control, you will successfully accomplish this important task. May I also express our appreciation and thanks to your predecessor, Ambassador Alessandro Vattani of Italy, for his contribution in bringing this year's CD session into a smooth start? I would also like to extend our best wishes to Mr. Vladimir Petrovsky, Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, as well as to Mr. Abdelkader Bensmail, Deputy Secretary-General of the CD.

Bulgaria supports the early conclusion of a universal, multilateral and effectively verifiable nuclear-test-ban treaty. We consider the CTBT an effective tool for halting the vertical and horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons. It is encouraging that broad agreement has emerged to establish an international monitoring system (IMS) composed of a package of four technologies - seismic, radionuclide, hydroacoustic and infrasound monitoring. It is our belief that the synergistic effect of the application of those four technologies, with the priority role of seismic control could increase substantially the cost-effectiveness of the whole system.

The Republic of Bulgaria has already established a temporary national data centre in order to take an effective part in the ongoing GSETT-3 experiment. We concentrate now our efforts on the compilation and storage of gamma data, as well as on the preparation of a beta station at the Vitosha observatory (beta VTS). In our view GSETT-3 will represent a major contribution to the elaboration of a prototype international seismic monitoring system. At Bulgaria's disposal are considerable expertise and equipment that might be used in a future CTBT verification system under suitable international circumstances. We favour a cost-sharing formula which can ensure just and equitable burden-sharing, clearly defining the States hosting IMS facilities and deserving international support.

We should also identify other ways and means of funding the future IMS stations, situated on the territories of the least developed countries, as defined in the United Nations relevant annual list, as well as on the territories of countries whose participation for geographical reasons is important for adequate global coverage.

My delegation holds the view that a future international organization should best promote the objectives and purposes of a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty. The location, structure and experience of other existing intergovernmental organizations should be of great help in this respect. We consider the candidature of Vienna as the one deserving most serious consideration.

We regard the possible spread of weapons of mass destruction as one of the major concerns of the 1990s. Recent developments in different parts of the world made it clear that under the new security environment the dangers

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and the incentives for the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction have increased rather than decreased. The existing regimes of multilateral treaties such as NPT, BWC and CWC envisage basic restrictive norms in the field. My Government supports any efforts to further strengthen those regimes. We also share the view that the peaceful economic activities of each sovereign State should not be disturbed by any of those regimes.

Bulgaria strictly abides by its obligations as a party to the existing export control regimes. My country is a member of the Nuclear Suppliers Group and the Zanger Committee. The guidelines of the Missile Technology Control Regime and the Australia Group are in our opinion an indispensable part of our national export control legislation, though we are still not members of the MTCR and the Australia Group. Such an approach, we are convinced, strengthens the main objectives of the non-proliferation regime.

Bulgaria believes that the NPT is the cornerstone of the whole non-proliferation regime. We favour the indefinite and unconditional extension of the NPT and believe that such an outcome would further strengthen global security and stability. Bulgaria has associated itself with the European Union joint action adopted last year on the preparations for the forthcoming NPT Conference, which aims at achieving this objective.

The success of efforts aimed at banning nuclear tests and strengthening security guarantees for non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the NPT will contribute to achieving peace and prosperity. Bulgaria supports the proposals urging all States, especially nuclear-weapon States, to endorse initiatives designed to avoid the use of nuclear weapons and prevent nuclear war, as well as the proposals aimed at preventing the first use of nuclear weapons against each other. Bulgaria attaches particular importance to articles III and IV of the NPT, relating to safeguards and technical cooperation. We are convinced that the NPT review and extension process will interact with developments within IAEA in these two areas.

A world-wide cut off in the production of fissile material for weapons purposes would be another extremely important nuclear arms control measure capable of strengthening the non-proliferation regime. The Conference on Disarmament already undertook work in this field. My delegation would like to express its appreciation of the efforts made by the Friend of the Chair Ambassador Gerald Shannon of Canada with a view to obtaining consensus on a negotiating mandate for a relevant ad hoc committee. In our view no mandate whatsoever of that committee could prejudge the possible scope of a relevant treaty which is to be further clarified during the negotiations.

My delegation regrets that the CD has so far not succeeded in establishing ad hoc committees on transparency in armaments, negative security assurances and prevention of an arms race in outer space. We are committed to an early start of these working bodies with the mandates already agreed last year. At the same time the Bulgarian delegation, taking into consideration the difficulties of some CD members, is flexible as to the future mandate of the TIA Ad Hoc Committee. It is our belief in any case that the work done so far in this field should continue, especially with respect to the measures

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relating to conventional arms. The single multilateral negotiating body of disarmament should not lose the momentum in balancing at least to a certain extent the nuclear and conventional CD agenda items. In the agreed working programme of last year's Ad Hoc Committee on TIA, conventional arms were not the only item under consideration. Transfers of high technology with military implications and weapons of mass destruction were also addressed with a view to elaborating practical means to increase openness and transparency, in accordance with existing legal instruments. We believe that the issue of TIA should not be turned back to the stage of informal consultations led by a special coordinator. The TIA Ad Hoc Committee, unlike some other CD working bodies, already started discussions on several concrete aspects of the working papers put forward last year. We are ready to re-establish the work of the TIA Ad Hoc Committee within the existing mandate, though we remain flexible to reconsider the possibility of including both conventional-weapons and weapons-of-mass-destruction aspects.

My delegation is convinced that all non-nuclear-weapons States which have renounced the nuclear option do not deserve to remain vulnerable to the use or threat of use of such weapons. This legitimate right of States could be completely and effectively guaranteed in a multilaterally negotiated, legally binding international instrument based on a common formula. To this end, an adapted new option of resolution 255 of the United Nations Security Council from 1968 would be a good example of a responsible attitude of the nuclear-weapon States on the eve of the NPT review and extension Conference. This resolution could be an appropriate point of departure for negotiating a future treaty.

Finally, let me express our regret that the CD has failed so far to reach a consensus on the issue of expansion of its membership. In our view the enlarged composition of this body will increase its representativeness and effectiveness. At the same time, we do not want to miss this opportunity once again to reiterate our position on the Slovakia case, which we consider a separate one, deserving a positive solution without any further delay.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Bulgaria for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Egypt, Ambassador Zahran.

Mr. ZAHRAN (Egypt) (translated from Arabic): Madam President, I would like at the outset to express my pleasure at welcoming you to Geneva and to the Conference on Disarmament, where you have recently taken up your responsibilities as Permanent Representative of Japan. It is not every day that a new colleague arrives in the Conference on Disarmament to take up immediately the duties of President, and I therefore wish you every success during your presidency, particularly since a number of unresolved issues will need to be pushed. I wish to assure you of the full support and cooperation of the delegation of Egypt, especially in view of the close relationship between our two countries, as reflected in President Mohammed Hosni Mubarak's visit to your country this week.

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I also take this opportunity to welcome our new colleagues, the Ambassadors of Morocco, Myanmar and China, and I wish them every success.

We have listened today to the important statement made by His Excellency Ambassador Blomberg, the Under-Secretary of State for Political Affairs of Finland, and, as I welcome him in the name of the delegation of Egypt, I would like to wish him and his friendly country every success. I also avail myself of this opportunity to express our appreciation to him for the positive contributions made by Finland to the work of the Conference on Disarmament.

Much has been said over the last three years on the question of transparency in armaments, and on several occasions positions have been attributed to some delegations which have not accurately reflected their views. Thus, we have deemed it necessary to clearly specify our position on transparency in armaments, taking into account the fact that the establishment of the committees on nuclear security assurances and on prevention of an arms race in outer space has unfortunately been suspended pending the resolution of the transparency issue.

I am confident that those of us who attended the deliberations of the First Committee in New York during the forty-sixth session of the General Assembly in 1991 will recall the intensive consultations that took place regarding the text of what became resolution 46/36 L entitled "Transparency in armaments". It is no secret that already at that time there were significant divergences of views on several aspects of the text of that resolution and the way in which that subject should be approached. The delegation of Egypt at that time and on many subsequent occasions advised against the use of vague and unusual terminology which would inevitably result in differing interpretations of the text. To give an example, the phrase "military holdings" is not clearly defined, and in our view it would have been much simpler to use instead a clear term such as "stockpiles", as already proposed by the delegation of Egypt at that time. The same ambiguity applies to the phrase "procurement through national production", which was insisted upon by some delegations in order to avoid using a straightforward and much clearer reference to "national production". To our regret, restrictive factors were also introduced into the resolution when it was drafted where weapons of mass destruction are concerned, in an attempt to restrict any discussion on transparency in this field within the framework of existing legal instruments. To us, such a reference means the exclusion from the discussions of those countries which are not party to any of these existing legal instruments, which is in our view not a constructive or correct approach to adopt. The resolution's numerous shortcomings were then crowned with the establishment of a "United Nations Register" restricted to certain categories of conventional arms, while disregarding other types of conventional arms, as well as weapons of mass destruction, transfers of high technology with military applications, stockpiles and national production during the deliberations of the transparency Committee, even though the resolution is not entitled "Transparency in conventional arms".

Given all these inconsistencies, of which we were well aware and which we tried our best to rectify, Egypt would have been entirely justified in voting

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against resolution 46/36 L and objecting to any attempt to deal with this issue in the Conference on Disarmament. Nevertheless, we voted in favour of the resolution in order to show our good intentions and the extent to which we are committed to achieving full transparency in all types of arms, in the hope that more consultations on this issue would put the international community on the right track to deal with this subject in a comprehensive manner. We also voted in favour of the said resolution because paragraphs were added to it which requested the Conference on Disarmament to look into this issue and which, to us, offered a good opportunity to try to redress the shortcomings of the resolution itself as well as those of the Register which was established thereunder.

When the subject of TIA came to the Conference on Disarmament in 1992, Egypt continued to play a constructive role in the deliberations on that subject. Although an item entitled "Transparency in armaments" was included in the Conference on Disarmament's agenda, no consensus was reached on the establishment of an ad hoc committee to deal with this question. I myself had the honour of being entrusted with the function of Special Coordinator on the subject, and the informal open-ended consultations I conducted with the participation and cooperation of all members of the Conference on Disarmament resulted in a compilation of different views on the various aspects of transparency in armaments dealt with in resolution 46/36 L (operative paras. 12 to 14). This was reflected in the report by the Conference on Disarmament for 1992, which was submitted to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session. It was not possible then to reach a consensus on any of the issues, and it was clear that a significant divergence of views existed on all the subjects discussed during that session. During the Conference's session in 1993 I also had the honour of chairing the Ad Hoc Committee on TIA, which was established for the first time that year, and the discussions which took place in the Committee reflected a divergence of viewpoints and positions because it became clear to our national authorities that the Conference on Disarmament was not in a position to achieve what we had hoped to achieve when we adopted that resolution 46/36 L during the forty-sixth session of the General Assembly in 1991. That was due to the selective and restrictive approach adopted by some delegations in dealing with this subject. It also soon became clear that, to some, the objective was not to achieve complete transparency in armaments or to expand and improve the United Nations Register but simply to receive a maximum amount of information on the overall military capabilities of some countries while divulging a minimum of information on one's own.

This year, since the beginning of the Conference's session for 1995, we have repeatedly heard that several non-aligned and other countries are obstructing the re-establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee on Transparency in Armaments because they are opposed to transparency in general, and, as a result, do not want to be constrained by any specific commitments in this regard. Such views are totally unrealistic. Recalling a few facts might help to show just how wrong they are. First, Egypt firmly supported the need to include all weapons of mass destruction in the United Nations Register. While we are certain that no country will report its illicit activities to the

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United Nations, it is not unreasonable to expect self-confessed nuclear-weapon States or those which possess nuclear, chemical or biological weapons to announce that fact. Is this transparency? Thus, we find that there is some kind of understanding of what is being requested by some delegations, namely the need to deal with stockpiles within the framework of the mandate which is being negotiated, a mandate for the establishment of a committee concerned with the item on the prohibition of the production of fissile materials which contribute to the manufacture of nuclear weapons or any other nuclear devices.

Secondly, the delegation of Egypt has repeatedly stressed the need to find the best ways and means of reporting on transfers of high technology with military applications. If it is possible to establish selective and restrictive control or monitoring systems - to which we are opposed - for certain activities, then we could surely set up global, balanced and non-discriminatory mechanisms to monitor transfers of high technology with military applications with the aim of exchanging information in a balanced and transparent manner about the military capabilities of each and every country. Would that not be considered as transparency?

Thirdly, Egypt strongly advocates the inclusion of additional types of advanced conventional weapons in the United Nations Register, and fails to understand why some refuse to include in the Register various types of advanced conventional weapons which, when used, could have devastating effects. Why should reporting on conventional weapons be restricted only to those seven categories of conventional arms which are available to smaller armies, while more advanced conventional arms in the possession of larger armies escape all scrutiny? Is that transparency?

Fourthly, the delegation of Egypt has also supported the idea of injecting a degree of transparency into the field of research, development, testing and evaluation. Since it is common knowledge that arms classified under one of these categories can be and have been used in the field, we wonder why no consultations are taking place on measures to report them. Do these measures not come under transparency in armaments?

In the light of the positions already adopted by Egypt vis-à-vis transparency in armaments during the past years within the framework of the CD, in addition to the aspects that I have just referred to, we are far from opposing the application of transparency to all fields of armaments or wanting to block it. The opposite is true. We are opposed only to selectivity. Transparency in armaments is a relatively new item on the Conference on Disarmament's agenda, and we will do our best to ensure that it does not meet the same fate as other dormant items on the Conference on Disarmament's agenda.

Items 2 (Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament) and 3 (Prevention of nuclear war, including all related matters) are regrettably, to judge by past experience, little more than formal items. They are re-inserted every year on the agenda of the CD without any progress being achieved in dealing with such items. Moreover, items 4 (Prevention of an arms race in outer space) and 5 (security assurances) are examples of items on

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which, despite the good will of an overwhelming majority of the participants in the Conference on Disarmament, the desired progress has not been achieved. As regards item 7 (Comprehensive programme of disarmament), its fate too is not less bleak for reasons that I became well aware of personally in 1992 when I had the honour of being Special Coordinator on this item. Due to the opposition of certain delegations to this particular item, no positive results could be reached.

At this stage it is indeed useful to remind those present of the fact that conventional weapons are being negotiated upon within various frameworks. For example, I can refer in this connection to the 1981 Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects, which was negotiated within the framework of international humanitarian law. In addition to all this, a group of governmental experts concerned with the preparations for the review conference of States parties to the said Convention held many meetings with a view to improving the text of the said Convention. It is only natural, if we are negotiating on a Convention to restrict the use of conventional weapons which have excessively injurious effects, that we should also negotiate on weapons which are more harmful and more destructive, namely nuclear weapons.

These were a number of clarifications my delegation wanted to make at this stage concerning its position on TIA, considering the fact that we have noticed that there is a growing trend among some delegations to the Conference which does not accurately reflect the real positions of all countries as regards the question of transparency in armaments. Before concluding, I would like once again to urge the Conference on Disarmament to proceed rapidly to the designation of a special coordinator on TIA who could try to reconcile the various positions on the subject and determine whether there is a possibility of reaching consensus on the establishment of an ad hoc committee on a sound basis. I would also like to reiterate the request made by a large number of Conference members, including Egypt, advocating the inclusion of a separate item on nuclear disarmament as item 2 of the Conference's agenda, to be dealt with through an ad hoc committee as a high-priority item, particularly as we are approaching the NPT review and extension Conference to be held in April/May 1995 and in view of the desire to achieve the objectives we agreed upon in 1968 on the conclusion of the non-proliferation Treaty. I am referring here in particular to article VI, which states:

> "Each of the Parties to the Treaty undertakes to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament" - I repeat, "and to nuclear disarmament" - "and on a treaty on general and complete disarmament" - "under strict and effective international control."

Considering the fact that the Conference on Disarmament is the sole international negotiating forum concerned with disarmament questions, it has a basic responsibility to conduct the negotiations needed to achieve the aims

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and objectives of the non-proliferation Treaty, particularly as regards the implementation of the provisions of article VI of this treaty, which I quoted above.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the distinguished representative of Egypt for his statement and for his kind words addressed to me. This concludes my list of speakers for today. Does any other delegation wish to take the floor at this stage? I recognize the distinguished representative of the United Kingdom, Ambassador Weston.

Sir Michael WESTON (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland): Madam President, let me start by congratulating you on the calm and efficient way in which you are conducting our business. I had not put myself down to speak, but having listened to Ambassador Zahran, I thought I should make one or two remarks.

I think it was very helpful for us to have the views of Egypt spelt out once again. There are, of course, no surprises in what Ambassador Zahran said; he is nothing if not consistent. The view of my delegation is quite clear. My Government wishes to see a balance in the Conference's work between nuclear and other items. We have always seen TIA as the one item currently being dealt with by the Conference which permits consideration of conventional issues. It seems to me, quite frankly, that Ambassador Zahran has spelt out very clearly exactly why we need to re-establish the Ad Hoc Committee soon, if only to debate the important differences of view to which he refers. I would note in this connection that last year, under the admirable chairmanship of Ambassador Boytha, TIA was the one Ad Hoc Committee which actually made use of all the time allocated to it. I am confident that once it is re-established under Ambassador Hoffmann's leadership, it will do the same this year. Differences of view over the scope of the discussion have not prevented agreement on the establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee in the past, and yet they are not new. I regret that they appear to be being allowed to prevent the establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee this year.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the distinguished representative of the United Kingdom for his statement and for his kind words addressed to me. Is there any other delegation who wishes to take the floor? I see none.

As delegations are aware, a number of issues relating to the Presidential statement, covering the agenda and organization of the 1995 session, are still pending. These pending issues are being dealt with in the Presidential consultations as well as in my own bilateral consultations. I certainly appreciate the vigorous efforts made by the member States and groups. I do hope that, as the end of the first part of the session draws near, the remaining obstacles will be overcome through further intensive efforts so that the Conference might address all the items on its agenda in a more determined fashion.

(The President)

The secretariat has, at my request, circulated a timetable of meetings to be held by the Conference next week. This was prepared in consultation with the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban, is tentative and subject to change if necessary. On this basis, may I take it that the timetable is acceptable?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: The next meeting of the Conference on Disarmament will take place on Thursday, 23 March 1995, at 10 a.m.

The meeting rose at 11.15 a.m.